

## Demystifying the First War of Independence of 1857

**Dr. Lalita Kumari**

Assistant Professor, Department of History, Lakshmibai College



**ABSTRACT:** This research paper 'Demystifying the First War of Independence of 1857' is tended to rattle the jinx of not to call it a first war of independence. After the completion of more than 167 years when the most comprehensive and commendable works have been done by the generations of researchers/ historians from different regions of the subcontinent, so, it seems most opportune time to demystify the jinx of First War of Independence'. This paper is attempted to examine and analyze the uprisings in the different regions of the subcontinent simultaneously which lasted more than two years and shook the shackles of the British Empire. Contextually, when most of the regions/castes/ creeds were participating against the white race -the British, hence, it will be most plausible to call it a first war of independence.

**KEY WORDS:** Civilization and Barbarism, Bishnupuria, Yulbaglu, Halaguli, Nasara, Jihad

Until completion of a century the history of the 'mutiny of 1857' appeared conjectural because it was mostly based on the memory of the officials of the East India Company, ICS officers, travelogues of the British and European travelers or it was based on colonial archives, if it is paraphrased. More than 700 items were published on 1857, most of them were contemporary accounts of the mutiny of 1857 and the following decades. On its centenary in 1957, substantial additions were made. Some new archival sources were published which threw new light on ignored regions of India. Hence, a fairly lively debate on the interpretation of 1857 was set off. Notwithstanding 'official historians' <sup>1</sup> of 1857 S. N. Sen. and S.B. Chaudhary did not go beyond the historical sources in the English language. The native voice was scarcely heard; local, regional /sub-regional, multi-dialectical sources or the indigenous sources were scarcely utilized; history enshrined in hagiographies and folklores, myths and oral traditions were rarely utilized.

In the process of interrogating history, new generations of historians produced the most comprehensive research work worldwide on the eve of 150 years of the Rebellion 1857 in 2007 and in the subsequent decade. Arguably each generation interrogates history in its own way. Today, this interrogation is molded by concerns of the present times and such concerns might be different from the concerns of the past. It was 1980s and 1990s when Subaltern and women historiography respectively were being compiled and a great impetus was being given on the roles of plebeians and marginalized classes of the society and the role of the women in epoch making events of history. Researchers started delineating the roles of Matadeen Bhangi, a sweeper of the barrack of Meerut who expressed his sarcasm against the brahmanical practice of untouchability and impurity instigating Mangal Pandey to rebel; Jhalkaribai<sup>2</sup> -a semi mythical figure and a servant of Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi; likewise the folk memory of Uda Devi, a Pasi woman- a close associate of Begum Hazarat Mahal; prostitutes like Azzizunbai<sup>3</sup> who was directly in relation with the Sepoy of 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry, Shamsuddin of Kanpur, Husaini of Kanpur, who was, it seems, in touch with Nana Saheb and Azimullah Khan in hatching plots to kill the Europeans at Bibiganj in Lucknow.

And Umraon Jaan- who wanted to set herself free from the clutches of the Khanam-a hierarchical position of the brothel. Their participation instigated other prostitutes to involve their selves in the rebellion and fight for the motherland.

Until the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the so-called mutiny of 1857 was treated in the light of military history and considered the administrative loopholes and role of some of the disgruntled sepoys for the outbreak of this catastrophe. Nevertheless, it was never debated in terms of the policy failure of the British Empire. However, what Karl Marx and Engels professed in the 1850s was echoed by the colonial historiographers like John Gallagher and R. Robinson in 1953 about the outbreak of the rebellion of 1857 which was a reflection of the 'imperialism of the free trade'.<sup>4</sup> The British historian of 1857 revolt John Kaye quotes Viceroy Canning who had started using the 'mutiny' as 'rebellion' while opposition leader of the British Parliament Disraeli arrived at the conclusion by seeing the aftermath of the mutiny as a 'national revolt'.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, C.A. Bayly quotes Eric Stokes who establishes that the 'Indian rebellion of 1857 was not one movement....but it was many'<sup>6</sup>. To substantiate his argument, Eric Stokes gives references of two local sources of United Province where Jats particularly of Hapur Paragana in Meerut district fought on behalf of the British while Jats of Baraut and Barnawa Pargana [on the other side of the Hindon River] fought against the British forces and sent supplies to the rebels at Delhi.<sup>7</sup>

## Demystifying the First War of Independence of 1857

Even after these encounters by some important historians of Britain, the colonial historiography is tended to term the rebellion 1857 as a mere 'Sepoy's mutiny.' This colonial historiography was challenged by a new generation of historians and researchers when the 'global war on religious fundamentalism' was started in the new millennia. What Sir John Kaye and Malleon<sup>6</sup> try to search the nature of the rebellion in terms of religious sentiments of both the Hindus and the Mohamdans were being eroded by some of the evangelical elements of Britain in 1857 and 1864, resurfaced in the first decade of the new millennia. T. R Homles popularized the revolt of 1857 as a conflict between 'civilization and barbarianism.'<sup>8</sup>

When the global war on 'Islamic religious fundamentalism' was initiated by the Western countries under the leadership of United States of America, the new generation of historians and researchers again started searching religious issues enshrined in the rebellion 1857. John Kaye and Colonel Malleon question Christian evangelical endeavors to convert Hindoos and Muslims to Christianity led to the outbreak of the rebellion 1857. But, whether this rebellion was a 'Jihad' against the Christians in India which has been persistently boggling our mind, does rebellion 1857 form a part of the long story of a conflict between Islam and Christianity? How correct it would be to locate a 'rip in the closely woven fabric of Delhi's cosmopolitan culture, opened in 1857' and its continuum with the school of Shah Waliullah, Wahhabism, the Deobandis, the Taliban with the powerful fundamentalist counter attack which modern west encounters today? Researchers have been trying to find the link between this religious fundamentalism and barbarism against the Christianity. In the context of the role of Wahabis in the rebellion 1857, K.M Ashraf cogently establishes that 'it was a righteous war' against the Christian evangelical endeavors' which can be easily traced in the slogans of the Wahabis when they shout "'Deen Bolo Deen"<sup>9</sup> to unify both the Hindus and the Muslims.

In the context of religious identities<sup>10</sup>, we must bear in mind the sub -continental location of India where multiplicity of races, creeds/ identities speaking multiplicity of languages, geographical regions, identities are bound to differ or contend with each other. Different identities, a sense of solidarity, the demand of loyalty are seen as unifying or the divisive force in different Conjunctures. Hence, it is more often possible to privilege one particular identity over all other as the key to understand what 1857 is about. That is why the tendency to emphasize the religious identity above all in the context of the revolt of 1857 is open to question. In this regard Irfan Habib quotes Chris Honey, a communist leader of South Africa, who was fighting against the apartheid- 'Religion has a very significant role in history, it is neither negative nor always positive. Hence, in different time and space, religion adopts a very different shape. Hence, it is difficult to accept the communal identity, e.g. Muslim identity in Jihad as the ruling idea behind the revolt of 1857. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, in his edited work- Rethinking 1857 asserts that in the process of analyzing the religious categories, the historians need to be 'context specific' and context sensitive'.<sup>11</sup>

In the first decade of the new millennia when 150 years of the Rebellion 1857 was celebrated in 2007, the most comprehensive research works were brought into limelight. At this juncture most of the untouched areas were covered like north- eastern parts of India, Kerala, Tamil land, Andhra region, Gujarat, Dandakaranya region, Bangladesh, North West Frontier Provinces of Pakistan and even castes, tribes/races, gender and creeds, folklores and hagiographies are being researched. Hence, the epistemology of colonial archives transcended to the local and global regions. Literary works in not only different European, African, American and Chinese languages are being researched but also vernacular languages like Magadhi, Bhojpuri, Urdu, Persian, Bundelkhandi, Tamil, Telugu, Tamil etc. and different scripts like Shikhat, Devnagari are seriously perused which are throwing new light on the rebellion of 1857. History of the rebellion is being constructed on the basis of not only colonial archives but also on the basis of hagiographies, graffiti, photographs, paintings, myths and oral traditions. Consequently most of the historians in recent years across their ideological biases have started considering the so-called mutiny of 1857 as the first war of independence.

However, the notion of the First War of Independence<sup>12</sup> was described for the first time in 1909 when V. D. Savarkar publishes a book 'the Indian war of independence' on the mutiny of 1857. Though it went incognito under the British rule. Under the aegis of nationalist historiography his work got scholarly attention when 'official historians' S.N. Sen and S.B. Chaudhary started a mega project of writing the history of the Mutiny of 1857 in 1957 when the rebellion completed its first centenary. Another important historian of the same era was R.C. Majumdar who had refused to write the official history on 1857 revolt. However, in the process of writing his own magnum opus [The History and Culture of India-11 Volumes] on 1857 rebellion he analyzed divergent views and divided them into two categories: 1] Rebellion of the people: famous historian John Norton elucidates the rebellion 1857 as the rebellion of the people in his treatise 'Topics for Indian Statesmen' which was supported by Alexander Duff, Malleon, John Kaye and Ball,

2] Mutiny of the Sepoy: by Charles Raikes, this view was subscribed by a large number of writers' even initial Indian writers also do the same i.e. Kishorichandra Mitra- an eminent Bengali writer in 1858, says -'the insurrection is essentially a military insurrection. It is a revolt of a lac of sepoys, it is nothing of the popular element in it. The proportion of those who have joined the rebels sink into nothingness when compared with those sympathies are enlisted with the government, while the former may be counted by thousands, the latter may be counted by millions. [R. C. Majumdar, Indian History and Culture, page 7625, Griffiths, page 259]. The General view of the eminent Indian statesmen down to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is proved by the statement recorded by Dadabhai Naoroji that the people in India not only had no share in it [the mutiny], but were actually ready at the call of the authorities to rise and support them. [Jadunath Sarvadhikari-Tirtha-Bhramana [pilgrimage] Bengali, gives long account of the mutiny in Varanasi and other neighboring areas].

## Demystifying the First War of Independence of 1857

On Savarkar's notion of the 'War of Independence', R. C. Majumdar cogently argues that the nature of any of the rebellions in the Indian subcontinent must be contextualized and analyzed specifically. Upon this pretext, Majumdar puts forward the examples of Sanyasis' rebellion [1770s], Wahabis' [1837-1865], Santhal's in Chotanagapur and Rajmahal regions [1855-56], Pindaris' rebellion and even individual rebellions by Surendra Sai in 1827 and questions that if the rebellion 1857 is described as the First War of Independence in that case what could be considered to these exemplified rebellions which predate 1857 revolt.

Besides this, he raises questions that how much these rebellions were prompted by material considerations and how much by the patriotic fervors to set free their country from the yoke of the foreigners. Majumdar did not find any patriotic incentive to set free the country from the foreign yoke in his magnum opus [The Indian History and Culture: British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance, pp. 625]. Hence, Majumdar tries to adopt holistic approach and taking into consideration of all the geographical regions of the Indian subcontinent where the rebellion occurred, argues that the so-called war of independence was neither 'First', nor 'National' nor the 'War of independence'<sup>13</sup>. However, these types of the conclusions were drawn at the onset of the centenary celebrations of the rebellion 1857. Subsequently, in the long span of 75 years of India's independence and the completion of 150 years of the Rebellion 1857 in 2007, myriad of commendable books, research papers, calligraphies, hagiographies, cartoons, paintings etc. were brought into limelight across the dialectical / linguistic or geographical barriers/boundaries.

In fact, the rebellion adopts different shapes in different regions e.g. in Madhya Pradesh and Punjab region it was the mutiny of the sepoys joined later by disgruntled elements who were eager to take advantage of the anarchy while U.P. and some parts of Madhya Pradesh as well as western parts of Bihar, the mutiny became a popular rebellion in which apart from soldiers, civilians particularly the dispossessed rulers of the Indian states, landlords, tenants and others participated. Another Indian scholar, S. B. Chaudhary maintains that the revolt of 1857 can be bifurcated into two sub-divisions, mutiny and rebellion<sup>14</sup> and asserts that the Mutiny was certainly a 'First War of Independence' as in the whole canvass of the recorded history of India it would be difficult to find a parallel to this gigantic anti-foreign combine of all classes of people and of many provinces of India. There was never a war in India lasting continuously for more than a year and simultaneously in all the regions which had for its objective the abasement and ejection of the alien ruling power. Another important historian S. N. Sen says that the Mutiny was

Inevitable. No dependent nation can forever reconcile itself to foreign domination. A despotic government must ultimately rule by the sword though it might be sheathed in velvet. In India, the sword was apparently in the custody of Sepoy Army. Between the Sepoy and his foreign masters there was no common tie of race, language and religion....The Mutiny was not inevitable in 1857 but it was inherent in the constitution of the empire. Sen also expresses in his work 'Eighteen Fifty Seven' that the rising of 1857 was a 'War of Independence'<sup>15</sup>.

Though this nationalist historiography of the First War of Independence was vehemently opposed by not only the colonial historiographers like Gallagher and R. Robinson but also by the Marxist historiographers who describe the revolt of 1857 as the struggle of the soldier-peasants' democratic combine against foreign as well as feudal bondage. Actually the revolt was anti-imperialist in which disgruntled elements of the society, feudal lords, princes and zamindars participated and wanted to overthrow the colonial rule. As far as the notions of subaltern historiography, women and Dalit historiographies are concerned they assert on the roles of plebeians and marginalized classes of the society, role of women and Dalits in the rebellion who rebelled and assisted, plotted in tandem with other rebels to overthrow the colonial yoke of Britain.

Despite heated historiographical debates the mystique or the notion of the first war of independence resurfaced in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century when India is celebrating 75<sup>th</sup> years of its independence [Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsava] under the present rightist dispensation at the Centre in India. History of the rebellion is being re-interpreted on the basis of new findings in different regions of the Indian subcontinent. Researchers are now trying hard to bring into limelight the unsung heroes of not only the central or northern provinces but also from Yandaboo, Arakan Valley, the coast of Salween river, Barak Valley to Sylhet, from north eastern states of India to Goa, Daman, Diu, Pindichery [Puduchery] Andaman & Nicobar Islands to present Bangladesh, from Myanmar to the North West Frontier Provinces of Pakistan, from Coimbatore to Jammu & Kashmir which were conspicuous by their absence in historical literature particularly at the time of centenary celebrations of the rebellion Eighteen Fifty Seven in 1957 when research were confined to very few Indian States.

Bishnupurias of Guwahati and Garo-Khasi Jaintiya hills played indispensable role in overthrowing the colonial yoke from their region. Same thing happened in Goa, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and even in Tamilnadu and Kerala as has been cogently proved by historian Ramchandra Divekar.

Similarly, again in the context of south and western India which was once considered oblivious of the rebellion 1857, new generation of researchers have brought new information of Halaguli uprising of 1857 at Bijapur district in Karnataka which was led by Venkatappa of Surapur [Bijapur]. In November 1857, Halagali Bedas revolted against the Arms Act which was passed and enforced in the wake of outbreak of the rebellion 1857 i.e. Disarmament Act No. XXVIII on 11th Sept. 1857 pronouncing manufacturing, importation and possession of arms and ammunitions illegal. This Act was against the chief profession of the Bedas of hunting and serve in the army. So, they considered their right to carry arms. This Act was enforced by the chief administrator K. Krishna Rao of Mudhol, Bijapur and reported by G.B. Seton Kerr.<sup>16</sup>

## Demystifying the First War of Independence of 1857

This rebellion was ruthlessly suppressed by the British on 29th November. During this struggle more than 300 people were arrested and 32 persons were hanged on 11th and 14th respectively at Mudhol. This was the solitary instance of 'self-immolation' to safeguard their sacred rights by the Bedas who were known for their valor since earliest times. Jamakhandi also witnessed an uprising. The rulers of Naragund and Surpur, joined by Mundargi Bheemarao, a zamindar and the Desai of Govankoppa, Hammige, Soraturu etc. also revolted in 1858. Mundargi Bheemarao was executed and the rebellion was quelled. In fact, 12 copies of Tatyana Tope's Anti-British Proclamation Chart is being recovered from Mundargi Bheemarao's family. There was a long revolt in Supa, jointly led by men from Goa and Uttara Kannada in which some of the Siddhis also participated in 1858-59.

While in the context of South India particularly Madras, both the historians of colonial as well as nationalist school describe south India as one of the most unaffected areas of the rebellion 1857. However, Madras Government Judicial Department Report J.O. No. 1081-A, 3rd Sept. 185, unravels a different picture of south India. This Judicial Report reads that the region was so tense in the wake of the rebellion that Madras police had to seize most of the roads leading to this headquarter. The Judicial Report also marks discontented regions of south India like Coimbatore, Chinglepetta, Northern Arcot, Chittur districts etc. were equally disturbed, politically volatile and tumultuous as well as not oblivious of the rebellion. While, tribals of Parlekimedi of Gumsur districts of Orissa equally participated against the British in this rebellion as has been delineated by Biswamoy Pati in his edited work 'Rebellion 1857.'<sup>17</sup>

Similar arguments were authoritatively put forward by both the Cambridge school and nationalist school of historians in the context of northern Indian states like Punjab, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir which were unaffected by the influence of the rebellion and interestingly the King of Jammu & Kashmir Gulab Singh supported the British with supplies against the rebels. However, in the last 75 years of India's independence, the most comprehensive and commendable research was pursued by the generations of scholars which establishes that these regions also witnessed tremendous discontent against the British and not only supported but also participated in it. People of Punjab and Haryana participated in large numbers which gave it a nature of a popular rebellion. Almost 300 Sepoys of Delhi walked down to Gurgaon in rebellion resulting in the fleeing of the collector of this district. A peasant Sadaruddin led the rebellion in the Mewat region which was participated by Rao Tularao and his nephew Rao Gopaldeo of Ahirwal, Haryana. People from Palwal, Faridabad, Bahadurgarh and Farukhnagar participated in the rebellion in large numbers. On 16th Nov. 1857, more than 70 British people were killed and 45 injured by the rebels in a battle at Naranaul in which British Commanders like Gérard and Captain Wallace were killed and Crease, Kennedy and Pierce were severely injured. Peasants of Hisar, Hansi, Sirsa, Panipat and Rohtak also participated in the uprising. Even the Sepoys of 60th and 5th Native Infantry countenanced the rebels and took part actively. Notwithstanding, it was crushed. New research also unravels that the north-western part of India was equally disturbed. In North-Western regions of India like Punjab, Ferozpur, Peshwar, Hoti Mardan, Jalundhar, Ferozpur, Ferozpur and Anjala, Sepoys of Native Infantry also participated in the rebellion which is conspicuous by its absence in the mainstream historical literature. Punjab Administrative Report<sup>18</sup> of 1856-57 and 1857-58 reveals that 386 rebels were hanged till death, 1998 people were killed and thousands were incarcerated. Even the first battalion of 206 people were sent to the Cellular Jail of Andaman & Nicobar islands. It's very interesting to note here that a very piquant situation arose in Jammu and Kashmir. Notwithstanding, the king of Jammu and Kashmir had reposed his faith in the British, the governor General was very apprehensive about the support of the Sepoys that whether they would support them or not as was reported by Akhbar-ul-Jaffar on 8th July, 1857. It cited a story that the Maharaja in a letter to Bahadur Shah Zafar had promised to support their cause and that he along with his troops were expected in Delhi any time. Hence, it can be contextualized that the British apprehensions of using Kashmir army is the experience that they had gained from Hyderabad contingent who had categorically refused to march beyond Deccan and declared unambiguously that they would not fight against their king--means the king of Delhi [the Mughal Badshah]. It can, thus, be argued that the British authorities were apprehensive that a Hyderabad contingent like situation might arise in Jammu and Kashmir.

Not only the North-Western regions but also the North-Eastern regions of India witnessed similar situations during the occurrences of the rebellion 1857. This volatile and tumultuous situation was felt not only by the ruling magnates but also the ethnic and linguistic minorities of the region particularly Assam, Chachar, Bangladesh, Manipur, etc., the Bishnupuria Manipuris who have been given a separate nomenclature 'Mayangas' by a British linguist G. A. Grierson<sup>19</sup>, understood the oppressive, exploitative and alienness of the British rule and actively participated in the rebellion 1857. The role of Bishnupuria Manipuris has been well described in several letters written by officers of British India like Superintendent of Sylhet and Collector of Sylhet, M. G. Allen- the Commander of Arakan Battalion between 22 October and 4th December, 1857 respectively which were addressed to the British authorities. When the Sepoys of Meerut started the rebellion on 10th May 1857, two soldiers Nutan Singha and Pular Singha left their job and started mobilizing Bishnupuria Manipuris for a greater participation in the uprising. They were in constant touch with the BNI-33 Company Sepoys of Chittagaon and planning a major attack which was sabotaged by the British and some of the Bishnupurias like Gillou Singha, Tulsidas Singha, Shyam Singha, Kailash Chandra Singha, Bhagabati Mishra, Tabna Singha etc. to name a few and 50 other rebels were arrested, banished and executed. The British Forces also marched to Pratapgarh, Karimganj, Latur, Malegar hillocks of Assam, Chachar and Bhanubil [presently in Bangladesh] regions decimating 37 Bishnupurias and other rebels of the north-eastern India.<sup>20</sup>

## Demystifying the First War of Independence of 1857

Ethnic and linguistic groups of Khasi and Jaintiya hills of Meghalaya were equally suffering from the British intrusions and oppressions since the treaty of Yandaboo in 1826. As per the conditions of the treaty, the British would occupy Assam, Rakhine [Arakan], the Taninthayi [Tenasserin] coast, south of the Salween River, besides supremacy in Cachar and the Jaintia Hills. The British planted tea gardens in most of these regions where British planters would live and the British army was stationed after the treaty of Yandaboo. The road leading to Brahmaputra valley to Cachar and other regions of the Barak Valley are hilly, terrainous, daunting and no direct routes were there to connect these two regions. However, the British had already established their supremacy in the Barak Valley. As soon as the treaty was signed the British found it difficult to have a direct communication with these two terranous valleys. Hence, they sought permission from U. Tirat Sing-the

Raja of Nongkhlaw, a principality in the Khasi Hills, to build roads connecting these two regions. The Khasis under the leadership of U. Tirat Sing of this region understood the ulterior motives of the British and declared war on them which continued from 1829 to 1833. Notwithstanding, this rebellion was suppressed but the tribes of Khasi and Jaintia Hills kept fighting against the British till 1862 under the leadership of Pnar Khasi and U. Kiang Nangbah. More than 50000 Khasis were mobilized from different villages by Nangbah and other leaders against the British which created havoc among the colonial officials. The Khasis occupied several places by defeating the British. In the mobilization of Khasi tribes of the Khasi and Jaintiya Hills, their tradition of 'omen' played indispensable role. Pnar Khasi tradition enumerates that 'he [U. Kiang Nangbah]' claimed himself an enlightened son of the heaven and a prophet of the new age. The old generation of the Khasis never waged war without ascertaining the win- ability in the battle through a system of divination. When they examined the system of divination and got the support, Nangbah mobilized the tribesmen and prepared them for the war and seized many positions. However, the Khasi tribes were suppressed under the leadership of Colonel Richardson and the Act of XVI of 1857 was enforced in the Jaintia Hills. Consequently, the Khasis of Meghalaya kept fighting against the British, though suppressed in Dec. 1862.<sup>21</sup>

S. N. Sen argues in his magnum opus, *Eighteen Fifty Seven*<sup>22</sup>, in estimating the popularity of any of the movements, we must not forget that only a determined minority takes active part in a revolt or revolution, while an overwhelming majority remains passive and an interested section might openly align itself with the existing order. Nowhere did a revolt command universal support. Outside Oudh and Shahabad there is no evidence of that general sympathy which would invest the mutiny with the dignity of a national war. At the same time it would be wrong to dismiss it as a mere military rising. The mutiny became a revolt and assumed a political character when the mutineers of Meerut placed themselves under the King of Delhi and a section of the landed aristocracy and civil population declared in his favor. What began as a fight for religion ended as a war of independence for there is not the slightest doubt that the rebels wanted to get rid of the alien government and restore the old order of which the King of Delhi was the rightful representative.

In the backdrop of Sen's argument and new researches, the so-called mutiny can be considered as a First of Independence.

People from north, south, east, west and central India participated in this rebellion. Different groups like Nasars [religious groups] also participated against this imperialist war. Nowadays, the history of the rebellion 1857 is not confined to the colonial archives or the jail manuals only, instead it is being constructed on the basis of oral traditions, hagiographies, graffiti, paintings and vernacular literature throwing new light making us to believe that really the so-called mutiny of 1857 was a first war of Independence, though it's up to the new generation to question and research further on this take. Thus, the so-called first war of independence of 1857 is not devoid of controversies and debates. Before the onset of this rebellion, a number of revolts had occurred e.g. the Sanyasi revolt of 1770s, Santhal uprising of 1855-56 etc. However, in the context of the revolts of Sanyasis and other tribal revolts, it can be said that every corner of the Indian sub-continent was not touched by either the tribal uprising or the Sanyasi revolt as was done by the revolt of 1857. So, it seems plausible to accept the rebellion 1857 as the first war of independence of 1857.

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## Demystifying the First War of Independence of 1857

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